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The names of the *Corn salad*, or *Fetticus*, or *Lamb's lettuce*, are, in France, *mache commune*, *accroupie*, *barbe de chanoine*, *blanchette*, *blanquette*, *bourssette*, *chuquette*, *clairette*, *coquille*, *doucette*, *gallinette*, *laitue de brebis*, *orillette*, *pommette*, *poule grasse*, *rampon* (à Geneve), *salade de ble*, *salade de chanoine*, *salade royale*; in Germany, *ackersalat*, *feldsalat*, *lammersalat*, *mausohr*, *rabinschen*, *rapunzel*, *schafmaulchen*; in Flanders and Holland, *koornsalad*, *veldsalad*; in Holland, *veldsla*; in Denmark, *kropsalat*; in Italy, *valeriana*, *erba riccia*, *dolcetta*, *gallinelle*,<sup>1</sup> *sarzet*;<sup>2</sup> in Spain, *canonigos*; in Portugal, *herva benta*; in the Mauritius, *mache*, *doucette*.<sup>3</sup>

Among the more ancient names are: Belgian, *velt cropper*, Lob., 1576; *witmoes*, *veltecrop*, *elcerooge*, Dod., 1616; gallo-belgian, *sallade de chanoine*, Lob., 1756; in English, *lamb's lettuce*, *corne sallade*, Gerarde, 1597; in France, *blanchette*, *poule grasse*, Lugd., 1587; *mache*, "Le Jard. Solit.," 1612.

(To be continued.)

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## EDITORS' TABLE.

EDITORS: E. D. COPE AND J. S. KINGSLEY.

THE meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, which has just closed its sessions in New York, was in some respects a noteworthy one. Nature was kinder to her worshippers than has been often the case at this season of the year in regions of small elevation and corresponding latitude, and the temperature experienced in New York was a delightful interlude in a season of exceptional heat and humidity. Although many of the citizens were living at their summer resorts, the entertainment furnished was fully equal to the anticipations and needs of the Association. Indeed, greater hospitality could not have been enjoyed without impairing the effectiveness of the meetings, and it is fortunate from this stand-point that New York's capacity in this respect was not more seriously taxed. As to the meeting, it may be truly said that the quality of the papers offered never was higher, and their interest and importance was never greater. The attendance, though not equal to

<sup>1</sup> Vilmorin, *Les Pl. Pot.*, 1883, 322.

<sup>2</sup> Allioni, *Fl. Pied.*, 1785, n. 12.

<sup>3</sup> Bojer, *Hort. Maurit.*, 1837, 174.

that at the Boston and Philadelphia meetings, was very good, numbering about seven hundred and fifty members. The United States Geological Survey was better represented than at any previous meeting. The excursions about the city covered a wider range of interest than at any previous meeting; physicists, social economists, biologists, and geologists being equally well provided for. In all respects the local committee, aided by the New York Academy of Sciences, succeeded in making the meeting enjoyable to all participants.

Most of the members will agree with us, however, that some comments on the treatment of the Association by the press of New York are in order. It may be asserted that at no late meeting has the work of the Association met with less appreciation from the newspapers of the locality where it has met than in New York. Some of the reports published were of the flippant, jocular type, the wit in some instances apparently emanating from very callow reportorial brains. In no instance were full reports given, but the fullest were always those of the least scientific communications, such as that of a Chinese gentleman, which never should have been read at all. We had thought that the reports of the *Tribune* would have redeemed the reputation of the press so far as possible, but even these depreciated after a very good beginning, and terminated in an extraordinary *fiasco* in a farewell editorial on August the 18th. Had we a funny column, we would reprint the first half of this editorial entire, but we must be content with making some comments on it, for it represents very correctly the attitude of the New York press towards American science for many years past.

The editorial opens with the following cheerful assertion: "The most noteworthy scientific congress that has met on this side of the Atlantic was the Montreal session of the British Association in 1884." We commend this sentence as a model of veracity (?) and good taste (?). "At the close of the session one of the learned presidents of the sections declared that its most important contribution to the world's stock of knowledge was the announcement, in a cable despatch from Australia, that monotremes were shown by actual observation to be oviparous." . . . "Indeed, the meetings of the British and American Associations are seldom memorable for discoveries or even discussions of phenomenal importance. A few notable addresses have been

made in England by such leaders of the scientific world as Professor Huxley and Professor Tyndall, . . . " Now, we are not prepared to speak for the British Association, but it has been quite the custom for American scientists to announce their most important discoveries in papers read before the American Association. Such was the case at the Philadelphia meeting, which followed immediately the notable meeting at Montreal. Among other important communications made, it was announced that the ancestors of the monotremes had been discovered in the reptiles of the Permian formation of Texas, a fact which was new, and important from every point of view. The fact that the monotremes are oviparous had been known for perhaps forty years. Another fact discovered by the English biologist, that the segmentation of the yolk of the monotremes is meroblastic, was really new, and formed a remarkable confirmation of the discovery announced in Philadelphia. Such coincident discoveries are rare in the history of science, and the present instance was, under the circumstances, especially interesting. As usual, the *Tribune* cannot cite any "notable addresses" delivered before the Association by Americans. Under the circumstances, our past presidents and vice-presidents will pardon us the assertion that such have been really delivered in this country also! To what extent the general indifference to science which prevails in New York is due to this kind of writing it might be interesting to inquire. The succeeding paragraph of this editorial shows some appreciation of the New York session, for which we extend thanks. We must, nevertheless, proffer to the *Tribune* one piece of advice,—viz., that it employ on its scientific work in future an American, and one who knows something of American science and scientists. In this way it may become what it once aimed to be in New York City, a scientific missionary *in partibus infidelium*.

THE American Committee of the International Congress of Geologists has survived the perils which threatened it at the New York meeting of the American Association. After an existence of several years, and the accomplishment of a great deal of work, it began to attract the attention of the present director of the United States Geological Survey. Although a member of the committee, the director has not taken part in its work

until just before the meeting of the Association, excepting by deputy, who was permitted by courtesy to be present at its deliberations. At the present stage of progress the director became very desirous of controlling the committee, and exhausted all the arts of parliamentary usage to accomplish that result. His efforts were, however, not successful, and the committee received a new lease of life by a resolution of approval adopted by Section E (the Geological), and of continuation by the Association at large. The committee thus represents officially in the Congress, American geological opinion, and it will no doubt endeavor to do so with the utmost impartiality. As a representative body it is well constituted. It embraces the following representation:

	Members.
United States Geological Survey.....	4
United States Geological Survey of the Territories (Hayden's).....	1
United States Geological Survey W. of 100th mer. (Wheeler's).....	1
State Survey, Alabama.....	1
State Survey, Minnesota.....	1
State Survey, New York.....	1
State Survey, New Hampshire.....	1
State Survey, Pennsylvania.....	2
State Survey, New Jersey..	1
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	13

In our opinion no scientific or other reasonable ground for a change in the representative character of the committee exists, and we are glad that no change has been made.

WITH the death of Professor Spencer F. Baird a landmark in American science has disappeared. We find it difficult to express adequately our sense of the important bearing which the life of Professor Baird has had on the present state of science in America. More than any other man he built up and sustained the existing body of zoologists in this country by his generous recognition and still more generous material support. To him, more than to any one man, science owes the recognition it has had in the councils of the nation, and the substantial support which it has received at the hands of our government. No one ever justly questioned his motives, for it was known to everybody that they were not selfish, and that the advancement of science was the one object of his life. His success is attested by the National Museum, and the Fish Commission, of the United States; two achievements

which have few parallels in the history of science. In the presence of Professor Baird's immense services to science in America, we can nevertheless pause to pay a tribute to the worth of his character. Perhaps his leading trait was a comprehensive benevolence which knew no distinctions, but embraced all in its benefactions to the limit of possibility.

Professor Baird's disinterested love of science will not be lost to us by his death. To his foresight is due the fact that he will probably be succeeded by men equally catholic with himself, and equally able to maintain the dignity of science at the national capital. We refer to Professor S. P. Langley, the present assistant secretary, and Mr. G. Brown Goode, assistant director of the National Museum.

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## GENERAL NOTES.

### GEOLOGY AND PALÆONTOLOGY.

On the Morphology and Origin of the Ichthyopterygia.<sup>1</sup>—There is no group of reptiles, the Testudinata perhaps excluded, of which the morphology of the skeleton and the origin has been more discussed than that of the Ichthyopterygia.

As the name says, the Ichthyosaurs were long considered as animals which had retained characters of fishes. The limb-bones developed as paddles were regarded as original stages, forming a link between the fishes and the higher Vertebrata. I shall show in the following note that the Ichthyosaurs are specialized Sphenodon-like reptiles, and that their fins are not original but secondary formations, like the paddles of the Cetaceans.

*The Skull.*—The skull is only comparable with that of the Rhynchocephalia, especially Sphenodon and the Lacertilia. The only real difference is that, like in the Cetaceans, the anterior part of the skull has been very much elongated. The *general* structure of the skull resembles that of the dolphins. In its *morphology* it is a copy of the Sphenodon skull.

The foramen magnum is bounded by four bones,—the large basioccipital, the two exoccipitals, and the supraoccipital. These parts are well known. Of the otic bones two are separated; the third, the epiotic, if ever free, is coossified as in all reptiles with the supraoccipitals. The opisthotic is a pretty large conical bone, touching the exoccipital and supraoccipital.

<sup>1</sup> A paper read before the American Association for the Advancement of Science, August 12, 1887.